

# museum of modern and contemporary art sri lanka

## Quarterly Newsletter #12 – October 2025

Since leaving our temporary premises in June 2025, the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Sri Lanka (MMCA Sri Lanka) has been actively engaged in a new phase of development — one centred on training, research, collaboration, and expanding regional and international connections.

### Building Connections in the Region

Our Chief Curator **Sharmini Pereira** presented at the 14th Experimenter Curators' Hub in Kolkata, India (18–19 July), organised by the Experimenter Learning Program Foundation. She was joined by **Thinal Sajeewa** (Assistant Curator), **Nimaya Harris** (Project Curator), and **Kaumadi Jayaweera** (Editorial Assistant). Pereira also took part in An Act of Repair: Hosting, Healing and the Future, a panel discussion organised by Pro Helvetia New Delhi on 20 July.

At the end of July, Nimaya Harris presented 'Framing Modernity: Minnette de Silva Archive and Postcolonial Image-making' at Image Worlds: Approaching the Bicentennial of Photography, organised by Offset Projects, Alkazi Foundation, and MAZE Collective Studio in New Delhi (25–26 July) to raise awareness about a digital archive project the MMCA Sri Lanka is working on in partnership with World Monuments Fund.

These engagements reflect the MMCA Sri Lanka's ongoing efforts to strengthen relationships within the wider arts and culture community in Asia and beyond.

Such engagements continued with **Thinal Sajeewa** participating in the seventh edition of the Curatorial Intensive South Asia (CISA) programme (28 July–11 August), hosted by Khoj International Artists' Association in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan New Delhi. Meanwhile, **Sandev Handy** (Senior Curator), joined the 2025 Gwangju Biennale Academy International Curator Course (GBICC) in South Korea, where he gave a talk and led a workshop on 15 September.

### Museum Intensive 4: Documenting Modern Buildings

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Back home in Colombo, we organised the latest edition of our professional training programme — Museum Intensive, which involved six organisations and 19 participants.

Museum Intensive 4: Documenting Modern Buildings took place from 29 September to 2 October 2025, focusing on methods of recording and preserving modern architectural heritage. The programme featured two workshops by Imran Khan from Factum Foundation and John Darlington and Javier Ors Ausin from World Monuments Fund, which included an ‘Introduction to Architectural Heritage Documentation: Photogrammetry’, and ‘Documenting Modern Buildings’.

Conceived in partnership with **World Monuments Fund** and supported by the **British Council**, this edition of the Museum Intensive underscored the MMCA Sri Lanka’s commitment to making museum training in relation to modern architecture more accessible, collaborative, and globally relevant.

### **Advancing Research**

A cornerstone of our current research involves cataloguing and digitising collections and archives. To this end, Research Assistant **Dhilashini Karthigesu** and Trainee Archivists **Yasasvi Munasinghe** and **Aaron Seneviratne** have been trained in research and archival practices. We are pleased to share that all three began their journey at MMCA Sri Lanka as Visitor Educators, reflecting the museum’s dedication to nurturing the next generation of museum professionals.

### **Celebrating Achievements**

We are excited to announce that the documentary film **‘No More Land’ (2024)** by **Anomaa Rajakaruna (b.1965)** was awarded the Satyajit Ray Bronze Award (Documentary) at the 8th South Asian Short Film Festival in Kolkata, India. The film was commissioned by the MMCA Sri Lanka and generously funded by the Supporting Effective Dispute Resolution (SEDR) project, funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.

In addition, the animated documentary **‘is this an architectural documentary?’ (2023)** by **Irushi Tennekoon (b.1989)**, **Suemdha Kelegama (b.1988)**, and **Sumudu Athukorale (b.1980)**, which the MMCA Sri Lanka commissioned for our exhibition ‘88 Acres’, had its Czech Republic premiere on 5 October at the 14th edition of the Film and Architecture Festival in the Czech Republic.

### **Founding Patrons Art Tour**

In September, a group of MMCA Sri Lanka Founding Patrons joined a Curated Art Tour of Sri Lanka's Southern Province (20- 21 September). In addition to studio visits, the group enjoyed guided tours led by architect **Philip Weeraratne** to houses designed by Tadao Ando and Shigeru Ban, and a tour led by architect **Sumedha Kelegama** to Geoffrey Bawa's (1919–2003) Red Cliffs Mirissa.

### **Looking Ahead**

As the MMCA Sri Lanka continues its journey towards establishing a permanent home, our mission to create Sri Lanka's first museum of modern and contemporary art remains at the forefront of all that we do.

Coming up next will be our first pop-up exhibition opening in January 2026, which continues our commitment to champion free public access, education, and dialogue, while we remain on the move!